punishable under Section 24 of the Emigration Act, 1983. Instances of Indian women workers abroad, being in distress, are brought to the notice of this Ministry from time to time and immediate remedial measures are taken through our Missions abroad.

Demonstration in front of White House

†3315. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some Indian workers have demonstrated in front of White House in America on the misuse of visas;

(b) whether the above said matter has been taken up with the concerned officers;

(c) whether Indian companies are involved in it;

(d) whether the above said matter has been investigated; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (e) As per the reports received from the Indian Mission in USA, 590 Indian workers were recruited and deployed in the yards of M/s Signal International, a marine fabircation company, locted at Mississippi and Texas. They had gone to US on H2B visas (Guest Workers Visa Programme) valid initially for 10 months, extendable at the discretion of the employer and the US authorities. The workers were aggrieved on account of alleged poor accommodation and amenities, deductions from their salary for accommodation, food, electricity water and also non-fulfilment of alleged initial commitment of permanent residency status.

The workers demonstrated outside the office of their employer, held a press conference, filed a court case against their employer, met the Indian Ambassador in Washington and also demonstrated in front of the White House.

The Indian Mission in USA has approached the US Government to conduct a detailed investigation on the complaints of Indian workers and take remedial measures. The Indian Mission has also taken steps to withhold visas from the main US recruiters involved to prevent them from entering India to conduct recruiting operations.

The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs has suspended the license of M/s Dewan Consultants, Mumbai, the Indian recruiting agent involved in this recruitment, and M/s. S. Mansur & Co., Mumbai, black listed the foreign employer and is also initiating legal action against the Recruiting Agent for violation of Emigration Act, 1983.

Indian workers in American shipyard

3316. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:
SHRI DARA SINGH:

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of plight of over a hundred Indian workers allegedly kept in Subhuman conditions at a shipyard on America's Gulf Coast;

(b) whether these workders have allegedly paid up to Rs. 8—10 lakh to a Mumbai recruiter

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.